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UNIVERSITY PRIZE POEM - BRYSON

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AN

UNIVERSITY

PRIZE POEM,

ON

HIS MAJESTY'S

ENTRANCE UPON THE

FIFTIETH YEAR OF HIS REIGN.

By W. A. BRYSON, Sch. T.C.D.

Quid prius dicam solitis PARENTIS
Laudibus.

Hor.

DUBLIN:

Printed by N. Kelly,

FOR THE AUTHOR.

1809.

To form a just estimation of the following verses, the Critic must enter minutely into the peculiar circumstances under which they are now presented to the Public.

The production of a very early age, executed within the short space of a fortnight, no inconsiderable portion of which was necessarily devoted to the performance of academic duties, must abound with faults, arising as well from inadvertency, as the strong bias of the mind to cherish recent conceptions, which the judgment of cooler moments, or maturer years may be reasonably expected to correct. Fully sensible of these imperfections, the Author would not trust exclusively to the liberal encouragement he has received from

the Governors of the University, whose personal, and official influence has been at all times conspicuously exercised to promote literary improvement, had he not been also honored with highly flattering marks of attention from persons the most eminently distinguished for taste and talent in this Kingdom.

ERRATA.

First line, first verse—*for* plain *read* plains.

AN

UNIVERSITY

PRIZE POEM.

1

O'ER Europe's bleak, and blasted plain
Wide waves the crimson flag of war,
And prostrate nations clank their chains
To greet its progress from afar.

2

From dreary Sibir's* pathless waste,
To fair Iberia's orange groves
On feet of flame, in frantic haste
The Demon of Destruction roves.

* Siberia.

2

3

The Muse, that dropt the burning tear
For Europe's weakness, Europe's woe,
Saw her last hope, the Austrian spear,
Fall pointless on the iron foe,

4

Saw the bright star, that shed its rays
On Danube's stream, and Esling's fight,
Ere yet it pour'd meridian blaze,
At Wagram quench'd in endless night,

5

Now gladly leaves those scenes of blood,
The lands of tyrants, and of slaves,
And flies where Albion spurns the flood,
And Erin sparkles* 'mid the waves;

* The Emerald Isle]

3

6

Beneath a Brunswick's gentle sway,
Where gaily bloom the sister isles;
While, pleas'd his children to survey,
Old Ocean clasps their shores and smiles.

7

Thrice happy lands! to you is given
More than the Muse can hope to sing,
The choicest gift of bounteous Heaven,
His Country's joy, a Patriot King.

8

Beneath his firm, yet temperate sway,
His People, happy, peaceful, free,
Have scared invasion far away,
And proudly swept the subject sea.

9.

Here then in Freedom's last retreat,
The Muse in safety wakes the lyre,
And thus from Learning's sacred seat,
Responsive to the warbling wire,

10.

She sings, "Let this auspicious day
Be hail'd by Mirth and Music's voice;
Let Britain pour the grateful lay,
And all her subject isles rejoice;

11.

Let the loud cannon's frequent roar
In thunder tell the nations round,
From sea to sea, from shore to shore,
Let Echo spread the joyful sound.

12

This morn, the fiftieth year restores
The King, the Father, to our prayers;
That God, who guards these favor'd shores,
The People, in their Monarch, spares.

13

Hail, Father of thy people, hail,
The meanest of the tuneful train
Has soar'd beyond Retirement's vale
To sing the glories of thy reign.

14

'Tis sweet to mount on Memory's wing,
And view the deeds of other days;
'Tis sweet to wake the lyric string,
And pay the meed of deathless praise.

15

As o'er thy long, and splendid reign,
I raptured take my airy flight,
What mighty Chiefs, a godlike train,
Rise to my view in dazzling light!

16

Hail gallant Men! your country's boast!
Who spread the terror of her name
From regions chill'd by polar frost,
To those that 'neath the tropics flame.

17

See from obscurity* arise
A meteor terrible, as bright,
That flames amid war's troubled skies,
And sheds afar its dreadful light.

* Alluding to Rodney's situation previous to his obtaining a command in the fleet.

18

Illustrious Rodney! while the sea
Shall roll in foam around our isle,
The British tar, shall think on thee,
And 'mid the roar of battle smile.

19

The chaplet Glory loves to bind
Around departed Valour's brow,
By many a weeping warrior twined
Shall deck the tomb of gallant Howe.

20

St. Vincent! on thy wave-worn side,
While bursts the Ocean's billowy roar,
His name shall live, who stain'd thy tide
With many a Spaniard's purple gore.

21

Thy sons, Batavia, long shall tell
Of Duncan's glory and renown;
Long in their ears shall sound the knell,
Of those that died at Camperdown.

22

Conspicuous 'mid the lesser fires*,
The star of Nelson burns sublime,
And while their feebler flame expires
Shall blaze throughout the night of Time.

23

While seven-fold Nile his current pours
The barren Libyan sands to lave,
While Hafnia's† palaces, and towers
Gleam o'er the Baltic's stormy wave.

* ——— Velut inter ignes
Luna minores.
Hor.

† Copenhagen.

24

While boils the rude and restless tide
Amid the shoals of Trafalgar,
Thy deeds shall be the Briton's pride,
Thy name his talisman in war.

25

Raise, England, raise the song of joy
To welcome home thy darling son,
And fill the festive goblet high,
In memory of his battles won.

26

But ah! what means that cypress bough
That coldly clasps the laurel wreath!
Why are the shouts that rose but now,
Hush'd in the doleful dirge of death!

27

And is he gone! the Ocean-chief!
The glory of the white-cliff'd isle!
Raise, England, raise the song of grief,
And mourn the Hero of the Nile.

28

Hero of Acre! thine the praise
To check the wint'ry torrents course,
To cloud the meteor's brightest blaze,
To curb the whirlwind's wildest force.

29

As meteor bright, as whirlwind strong,
Wide-wasting as the wint'ry flood,
The Gallic-battle swept along
And deluged Afric's plains with blood.

30

But see on Acre's battled towers,
The blood-red cross of England wave;
That flag, the dread of hostile powers,
Shall float o'er many a Frenchman's grave.

31

They come, they charge, they reel, they fly,
They rally, charge, and fly again;
Still England's banner burns on high,
And streams triumphant o'er the plain.

32

Italia's conqueror, Gallia's boast,
Baffled, and beaten, slow retires;
To mourn his fame in battle lost,
And droop o'er Glory's faded fires.

33

What hoary chief on Egypt's shore,
Stains with his blood the yellow sand,
And grasps the laurel bathed in gore,
Torn from the foe with dying hand!

34

Lamented Abercrombie! thine
The Victor's wreath, the Nation's tear,
The Historic Muse shall rear thy shrine,
And strew with flowers thy honor'd bier.

35

Who has not heard of Maida's field?
Who does not glow at Stuart's name?
Whose breast with pity has not swell'd
For Moore, who died in all his fame?

36

Nor shall thy deeds remain unsung,
Almeira's Hero, Erin's Pride,
Who first the bow of battle strung,
That idly graced Iberia's side.

37

On Vimiera's trophied plain,
On Talavera's well fought field,
She learn'd to burst the Gallic chain,
And Freedom's sword with thee to wield.

38

But brighter wreaths thy crown adorn,
Than ever graced the conquerors brow,
By Mercy from Oppression torn,
Her trophies o'er her vanquish'd foe.

39

Hark ! heard you not from Afric's shore,
The shout of wild tumultuous joy ;
Her swarthy sons shall crouch no more
Beneath a pallid tyrant's eye.

40

Pierc'd by Philosophy's bright ray,
And mild Religion's purer beam,
Their chains dissolve, and Freedom's day
Begins through Slavery's night to gleam.

41

Long had those children of the Sun
Beneath Oppression's iron rod,
Their course of life in sorrow run,
And bared the avenging arm of God.

42

Yes, injured People! all your tears
Were number'd by your heavenly sire;
Your groans still murmur'd in his ears,
Your sighs still fann'd the vengeful fire.

43

To thee O Fox! the task was given
To clear thy Nation's injured fame,
To make her peace with angry Heaven,
And teach the slave to bless her name.

44

Friend of Humanity! thy grave
Shall Freedom bathe with many a tear,
And at her feet the unshackled slave
Shall weave fresh garlands for thy bier."

45

But check my Muse thy daring flight,
And rest thy weak and wearied wing
Unused to soar so bold a height,
Untaught to strike so loud a string.

46

Thou God of Mercy and of Love,
Accept thy people's fervent prayer;
Grant that for many a year they prove
A Monarch's, and a Parent's care;

47

And long within these hallow'd shades,
May all the Muses love to dwell,
And twine the wreath that never fades,
For those in Britain's cause that fell.

FINIS.

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